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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

Approximately \$30,000,000.00 is the amount which our complacent Congressmen take from the people of the United States through the Postal Department, and give to the railroads. Quite a nice little sum, is it not? It makes a good big deficit in the Post Office Department, too, and you have to help make it up. It is on account of this deficit that a committee of Congress was appointed to look into the second-class mail (newspapers and periodicals) situation and suggest a remedy. With the distinguished intelligence of most Congressional committees, this one, instead of suggesting that the chronic looting by the railroads be stopped, recommends that the second-class rate be increased four times! Furthermore, the Post Office is required to do all of the work for the Government for nothing. If the Government paid for the carrying of its mail, as you have to, the Post Office would receive for this work some \$19,000,000, or enough to pay the entire deficit and leave a balance of over \$4,000,000 to the good. The Post Office pays to the railroads the sum of \$45,000,000 for carrying the mails. If the railroads received exactly the same rates for this matter which they do for carrying express matter, the Government would save about \$30,000,000. In other words, the railroads are getting some \$30,000,000 to which they are not legitimately entitled. How do they manage it? The scheme is very simple. In the first place, our ever kind and thoughtful Congressmen allow a rate that is nearly three times the regular express rate; the express

rate is high enough to pay both the express companies and the roads enormous earnings. For instance, the express rate from New York to Chicago is \$1.25 a hundred; for carrying the mails, Congress allows the same roads to charge \$3.56 a hundred. The second portion of the scheme of pilfering is no less simple nor efficacious. The mail matter carried by all railroads in the United States is weighed for 60 or 90 days every three or four years, and it is assumed that this is a true average of the regular amount of mail carried. The railroads are paid on that basis. Very simple; yes, indeed. But again the philanthropic Congressmen, who love the railroads more than they do you, take this particular period as the one auspicious time at which to send out large quantities of government publications, seeds, etc., to their constituents. And of course these are franked, so the harm is two-fold; an unusual amount of mail matter is carried by the railroads at this particular time, and no postage is paid upon it. Simple? Why it is childishly so! In one month when the mails were being weighed, a single physician in San Francisco was favored with three sacks of government publications, weighing probably two hundred pounds.

As a result of this continuous and increasing robbery, the attention of many people has been drawn to the postal deficit; even the Postmaster-General has taken official cognizance of it and in his report, December, 1905, says:

"The most striking feature in postal administration at this time, aside, perhaps, from the considerable extension and cost of the Rural Free Delivery service, is the increasingly large amount paid to railroad companies for transportation of mails. Correspondence on file in the department, as well as frequent references in the public press, indicate that there is a widespread popular belief that this pay is extravagant."

Dr. Taylor of the *Medical World* has employed Frank Parsons, Esq., a distinguished member of the Boston bar, to prepare a brief on this subject and it is largely from that document we have derived the facts here set forth. He says:

"The railways charge the Government about three cents a pound for hauling second-class matter, according to Professor Adams, and eight cents according to Postmaster-General Wilson, but haul the same stuff for the express companies for less than a tenth of a cent a pound. And if the railways had any serious objection to such rates they would hardly have permitted them to continue all these years, but would have provided against them in their contracts with the express companies."

It is to be regretted that we can not print the entire brief of Mr. Parsons, but we think enough

has been said to show pretty clearly just where the cause of the "postal deficit" lies; it is railroad graft, with the kind assistance of Congress. And this most excellent and worthy Congressional committee, will it recommend that railroad compensation for carrying mails be reduced to correspond with railroad charges for express and private shipments? It seems hardly likely; rather will they stand with their friends, the railroads, and recommend an increase in the charge on second-class matter. And what has that to do with medicine? It would seriously cripple a good many medical journals; it would increase the cost of publishing your own JOURNAL by several hundred dollars a year. And all this just to let the railroads steal some thirty millions of dollars from the Government. Why not drop a line to your Congressman and let him know that you know something about this particular piece of graft?

Loud spoke the gentlemen from New York, from the united and solidified profession of the Empire State, in the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association when the question of supporting the Association's Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry came before it. No firmer friends had decency, said they, than the officers and delegates and members of the great Medical Society of the State of New York. The President is no less a person than Joseph D. Bryant, President-elect of the American Medical Association, and in the list of officers and delegates one may find many distinguished names. The publication committee consists of the following gentlemen: E. Eliot Harris, F. M. Crandall, H. M. Biggs, A. T. Bristow, and Alexander Lambert; the last-named gentleman is also the Treasurer of the Society. Four of the five members are also delegates to the American Medical Association and have gone on record as highly approving the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the American Medical Association, and the policy of the *Journal in dealing* with nostrums. "Words, words, words; buzz, buzz, buzz!" In the last number of the Society's *Journal*, which supposedly represents the views of the publication committee and the officers of the Society and stands for the medical profession of the great State of New York—a "united profession"—one may find the following advertisements, many of which have been exposed as frauds or the methods of the promoters condemned in the pages of the *Journal A. M. A.*: Dios Chemical Co.; Glycozone; Tyree's powder; Kutnow's powder; Scott's emulsion; Vin Mariani; Gray's glycerin tonic; Pepto-mangan; California fig syrup; Buffalo lithia water; Mercauro, etc. How the breast of the President, Dr. Bryant, President-elect of the A. M. A., must swell with pride and satisfaction when he looks at the journal of his own State Society and sees how it mocks and derides the work of the association over which he will next year preside as President. How the distinguished mem-

bers of the publication committee, four-fifths of whom are delegates to the A. M. A., must glory in the fact that they can talk loudly of purity and of supporting the A. M. A., in the House of Delegates, and then go home and sell out the pages of the journal, which it is theirs to control, to any old nostrum-man whose cash is ready! Gentlemen, for a superb feat of mental and moral jugglery, you are to be complimented! Your support of the American Medical Association, and its policy, is certainly unique; your appreciation of the work of the Council is magnificently—nil. Your co-operation in the hard work of eradicating the nastiness of the nostrum evil, must give pride to the numerous members of your great Society; they must be glad to know that the Medical Society of the State of New York approves of the nostrums mentioned, even if the Council of the A. M. A. does not. They must be proud of your rhetoric in mouthing good words as delegates, and of your acute commercialism in selling the advertising space in their journal, which they have asked you to conduct, to such a good paying, upright and righteous bunch. Dr. Bryant's position is certainly unique and entertaining. As President of the A. M. A. he will naturally take a deep interest in the tremendously valuable work of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry. As President of the Medical Society of the State of New York he can see the journal of that great Society selling its pages to advertise preparations exposed by the Council of the association. With one hand he may help to tear down what he has aided in building with the other. Unless we are vastly wrong in our appreciation of Dr. Bryant, he will hardly relish the anomalous position in which the journal of his Society has placed him. These, shall we say criticisms (?) of ours, are actuated by jealousy; our JOURNAL has been able to reject or throw out the advertising of only nine of the things mentioned. But there is consolation: California was placed, by a kindly providence, as far away from New York as geographical circumstances would permit!

And the *New York State Journal of Medicine* claims to an exceeding virtue. It regularly publishes the following: "The *Journal* will not accept advertisements of preparations, etc., which are advertised and sold with unsubstantiated claims to the general public; or of preparations, the formulas of which are secret." Fine! Beautiful sentiments! But note the lovely gold brick. Read that quotation over carefully. Under this rule anything advertised to the public, so long as no unsubstantiated statements were made, would be acceptable in the pages of the *New York State Journal of Medicine*, the official organ of the Medical Society of the Empire State. Self-medication may be stimulated as much as possible, and the physicians in New York will help—if they are paid for it. And as for formulas! Just ask the Council on Pharmacy and Chem-

AND IT IS  
VIRTUOUS!